

## **BAC Draft Resolution on ABC Restructuring**

The Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) supports many of the changes proposed by the Clerk's office to better support engagement with residents across the many Appointed Boards & Commissions at the City. We are excited to hear there will be dedicated support from the Clerk's office for committees and their staff, deeper engagement with Council Members and the Mayor in the selection process, and a regular member orientation with an online counterpart. These changes all well serve the goal of making it easier for members of the public to engage with committees, either as committee members or as meeting attendees.

However, the Minneapolis BAC strongly disagrees with the Clerk's office proposal to entirely remove City staff from committees as part of the restructuring of Appointed Boards & Commissions. The Clerk's proposal is deeply disconnected from the reality of how City staff serve as department representatives. The removal in entirety of these seats would disincentivize these departments to engage with the public, reduce transparency, and would de facto reduce the effectiveness of committees.

The BAC requests that the Clerk's Office change the restructuring proposal to retain non-voting seats for City staff as department representatives.

While the goal of ensuring that City staff do not exert undue influence on advisory committees might seem logical on the surface, it's a problem that doesn't exist on the Minneapolis BAC and we have yet to see any evidence for elsewhere. On the contrary, City staff generally serve an advisory role while providing essential expertise for committee discussions.

For over three decades, community members serving on the Minneapolis BAC have determined the committee's focus areas, driven most discussions, and almost exclusively staffed leadership positions. City staff, like other agency representatives, typically approach their position on the BAC as an informational one, providing context, policy background, and technical insight to inform the perspectives of community representatives. They also serve as main points of contact for residents and representatives to request information from the relevant department and ensure presentations from those departments can be added to agendas. They do not exert undue influence on the position and policy focus of the Minneapolis BAC, and they operate with a high level of integrity and caution, ensuring they do not vote as individuals when representing their departments. The BAC is widely considered one of the most effective City advisory committees, and the involvement of City staff as informational partners is critical to that efficacy.